

Patient Information on **Gastric Emptying Scintigraphy**

Your doctor has ordered a test which will permit evaluation of how ingested food moves through your stomach and gastrointestinal (GI) tract. These studies will be performed in the Nuclear Medicine Section.

Preparation for the Gastric Emptying Test:

- You should not eat any food after midnight the night before the test. Unless otherwise directed by your physician, you may continue your normal medications which could be taken with a small amount of water or juice up to two hours prior to your study, but we request that you refrain from coffee or tea.
- Some medications are generally stopped for this test. This should be discussed with your doctor or health care provider. Drugs that affect gastric emptying such as Reglan (metoclopramide), Zelnorm (tegaserod), erythromycin, Motilium (domperidone) and antispasmodics such as Bentyl, Donnatal, Levsin, Robinul are usually stopped for three days prior to this test. Do not take any laxatives on the day before or any time during your study.
- Unless otherwise directed by your doctor, the following medications should not be taken for three days prior to your test and on the morning of the test. These include:
 - Pain medications such as Demerol, codeine, morphine, oxycontin, percodan, percocet.
 - Sedatives or tranquilizers, such as Valium, Librax, Ativan or Thorazine.
- If you have diabetes, skipping breakfast may affect your need for diabetic medication. If you are a diabetic and on insulin, we request that you bring your regular morning dose of insulin with you. You can take this with the meal that will be given to you. We may reduce your insulin dose to adjust for the small size of the breakfast. Often half of your insulin is taken with the test meal. If you take oral hypoglycemic medications, generally these are taken with the meal at Nuclear Medicine. If there are any questions concerning your dose of insulin this should be discussed with your physician or by calling 1-215-707-3475 and asking for one of the Nuclear Medicine physicians.
- If you have any other questions about a specific medication, ask your physician or nurse.
- Women, please note: This test should not be performed if you are pregnant. Inform your physician or nurse if you are pregnant or think you may be pregnant. You will be asked if there is the possibility of pregnancy. All female patients 50 or younger are given a questionnaire to complete about possible pregnancy or breast feeding. If you are breastfeeding or think you may be pregnant, you will be asked to see a physician about possibly rescheduling your test. In order to avoid studies in pregnancy and in order to minimize the effect of the menstrual cycle on GI function, consideration should be given to scheduling your study during the first 10 days of your menstrual period.

Description of the Gastric Emptying Test:

- For this test, you will be asked to eat a meal which consists of 2 scrambled eggs on toast together with water. The meal has been labeled with an isotope which will permit pictures to be taken as the meal passes through the stomach and the GI tract.
- Pictures are usually acquired with you standing first facing and then with your back to the camera. Additional images may be taken with you lying down. Between the images you will be permitted to walk about and continue normal activities. It is suggested that you bring some reading material and/or a "Walkman" or "iPod" if you have personal music preferences. These studies require no tubes in your mouth or stomach and try to simulate normal daily activities. The nuclear medicine section is slightly cooler than the rest of the hospital, and you may want to bring a sweater with you.
- The gastric emptying test takes four hours once it is started.
- At times, the gastric emptying test is combined with other studies. Depending on the study your doctor has requested, you will be in the nuclear medicine section for four to six hours. Typically the time required for each study is as follows:
 - Gastric emptying study only: 4 hours
 - Combined gastric emptying and gallbladder study: 4 hours
 - Gastric emptying study with small bowel follow transit test: 6 hours on the first day, and for 30 minutes the next day.
 - Gastric emptying, small bowel, and colon transit study: 6 hours on the first day and for 30 minutes on each of the three successive days for images.
 - This combined study is scheduled to begin on Monday or Tuesdays only.

If you have any additional questions concerning your study please feel free to call at 1-215-707-3475 and asking for one of the Nuclear Medicine physicians.

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